

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please replace paragraph [002] bridging pages 1 and 2 with the following amended paragraph.

[002] A variety of signal processing systems, such as but not limited to virtual private networks (VPNs), employ application programs containing security codes or keys, which must be invoked in order to successfully access and/or execute a system program. These security keys are typically stored in a memory chip installed on a printed circuit board, that has battery back-up in the event of a disconnection from the system's principal power supply. In an effort to prevent unauthorized access to the contents of such memory chips, it has been proposed to provide a switching mechanism that disconnects the battery when the system housing or case is physically opened, so that the contents of the (no-longer powered) memory will be indeterminate (random). It has been found, however, that many memory devices, especially those designed to operate at a low voltage, tend to retain their contents for some period of time, even ~~through~~through power has been removed. As a consequence, once power is restored, it may be expected that the memory will reacquire its previous state, so that the security information is compromised.